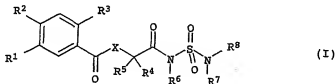


**Amendments to the Claims:**

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

**Listing of Claims:**

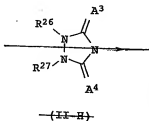
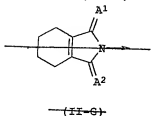
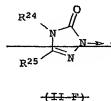
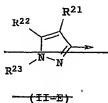
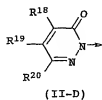
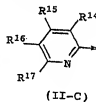
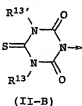
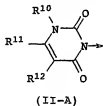
1. (Currently Amended) A 3-heterocyclyl-substituted benzoic acid compound of the formula I



wherein:

X is oxygen or NR<sup>9</sup>,

R<sup>1</sup> is a heterocyclic radical of the formulae II-A to [[II-H]] II-D,





$R^2$  is hydrogen or halogen,

$R^3$  is halogen or cyano,

$R^4$ ,  $R^5$  independently of one another are hydrogen, C<sub>1</sub>-C<sub>4</sub>-alkyl  
or C<sub>1</sub>-C<sub>4</sub>-alkoxy, or  $R^4$  and  $R^5$  together are a group =CH<sub>2</sub>,

$R^6$  is hydrogen, C<sub>1</sub>-C<sub>4</sub>-alkyl or C<sub>1</sub>-C<sub>4</sub>-alkoxy,

$R^7$ ,  $R^8$  independently of one another are hydrogen, C<sub>1</sub>-C<sub>6</sub>-alkyl,

C<sub>3</sub>-C<sub>6</sub>-alkenyl, C<sub>3</sub>-C<sub>6</sub>-alkynyl, C<sub>1</sub>-C<sub>4</sub>-haloalkyl,

C<sub>1</sub>-C<sub>4</sub>-alkoxy-C<sub>1</sub>-C<sub>4</sub>-alkyl, C<sub>1</sub>-C<sub>4</sub>-alkylthio-C<sub>1</sub>-C<sub>4</sub>-alkyl,

C<sub>1</sub>-C<sub>4</sub>-alkylsulfinyl-C<sub>1</sub>-C<sub>4</sub>-alkyl,

C<sub>1</sub>-C<sub>4</sub>-alkylsulfonyl-C<sub>1</sub>-C<sub>4</sub>-alkyl,

cyano-C<sub>1</sub>-C<sub>4</sub>-alkyl, C<sub>1</sub>-C<sub>4</sub>-alkoxycarbonyl-C<sub>1</sub>-C<sub>4</sub>-alkyl,

amino-C<sub>1</sub>-C<sub>4</sub>-alkyl, C<sub>1</sub>-C<sub>4</sub>-alkylamino-C<sub>1</sub>-C<sub>4</sub>-alkyl,

di(C<sub>1</sub>-C<sub>4</sub>-alkyl) amino-C<sub>1</sub>-C<sub>4</sub>-alkyl,

aminocarbonyl-C<sub>1</sub>-C<sub>4</sub>-alkyl,

(C<sub>1</sub>-C<sub>4</sub>-alkylamino)carbonyl-C<sub>1</sub>-C<sub>4</sub>-alkyl,

di(C<sub>1</sub>-C<sub>4</sub>-alkyl)aminocarbonyl-C<sub>1</sub>-C<sub>4</sub>-alkyl,

phenyl or C<sub>1</sub>-C<sub>4</sub>-alkylphenyl or

$R^7$  and  $R^8$  together with the nitrogen atom to which they are

— attached form a saturated or unsaturated 3, 4, 5, 6

— or 7 membered nitrogen heterocycle which may optionally

— contain one or two further heteroatoms selected from the



—group consisting of nitrogen, sulfur and oxygen as ring  
—members, which may contain 1 or 2 carbonyl and/or  
—thiocarbonyl groups as ring members and/or which may be  
—substituted by one, two or three substituents selected  
—from the group consisting of C<sub>1</sub>-C<sub>4</sub>-alkyl and halogen;

R<sup>9</sup> is hydrogen, hydroxyl, C<sub>1</sub>-C<sub>4</sub>-alkyl, C<sub>1</sub>-C<sub>4</sub>-alkoxy, phenyl,  
phenyl-C<sub>1</sub>-C<sub>4</sub>-alkyl, C<sub>3</sub>-C<sub>6</sub>-alkenyl or C<sub>3</sub>-C<sub>6</sub>-alkynyl,

R<sup>10</sup> is hydrogen, C<sub>1</sub>-C<sub>4</sub>-alkyl or amino,

R<sup>11</sup> is C<sub>1</sub>-C<sub>4</sub>-alkyl or C<sub>1</sub>-C<sub>4</sub>-haloalkyl,

R<sup>12</sup> is hydrogen or C<sub>1</sub>-C<sub>4</sub>-alkyl,

R<sup>13</sup>, R<sup>13'</sup> independently of one another are hydrogen or C<sub>1</sub>-C<sub>4</sub>-alkyl,

R<sup>14</sup> is halogen,

R<sup>15</sup> is hydrogen or C<sub>1</sub>-C<sub>4</sub>-alkyl,

R<sup>16</sup> is C<sub>1</sub>-C<sub>4</sub>-haloalkyl, C<sub>1</sub>-C<sub>4</sub>-alkylthio,  
C<sub>1</sub>-C<sub>4</sub>-alkylsulfonyl or C<sub>1</sub>-C<sub>4</sub>-alkylsulfonyloxy,

R<sup>17</sup> is hydrogen or C<sub>1</sub>-C<sub>4</sub>-alkyl,

R<sup>18</sup> is hydrogen, C<sub>1</sub>-C<sub>4</sub>-alkyl or amino,

R<sup>19</sup> is C<sub>1</sub>-C<sub>4</sub>-haloalkyl, C<sub>1</sub>-C<sub>4</sub>-alkylthio or C<sub>1</sub>-C<sub>4</sub>-alkylsulfonyl,

R<sup>20</sup> is hydrogen or C<sub>1</sub>-C<sub>4</sub>-alkyl,

R<sup>21</sup> is hydrogen, halogen or C<sub>1</sub>-C<sub>4</sub>-alkyl,

R<sup>22</sup> is C<sub>1</sub>-C<sub>4</sub>-alkyl, C<sub>1</sub>-C<sub>4</sub>-haloalkyl, C<sub>1</sub>-C<sub>4</sub>-haloalkoxy, C<sub>1</sub>-C<sub>4</sub>-alkylthio or  
—C<sub>1</sub>-C<sub>4</sub>-alkylsulfonyl,



$R^{23}$  is hydrogen or  $C_1$ - $C_4$ -alkyl;

— or

$R^{22}$  and  $R^{23}$  together with the atoms to which they are attached form a 5-, 6- or

— 7-membered saturated or unsaturated ring which may contain a heteroatom

— selected from the group consisting of oxygen and nitrogen as a ring-forming

— atom and/or which may be substituted by one, two or three radicals selected

— from the group consisting of  $C_1$ - $C_4$ -alkyl and halogen;

$R^{24}$  is hydrogen,  $C_1$ - $C_4$ -alkyl or  $C_1$ - $C_4$ -haloalkyl;

$R^{25}$  is  $C_1$ - $C_4$ -alkyl or  $C_1$ - $C_4$ -haloalkyl;

or

$R^{24}$  and  $R^{25}$  together with the atoms to which they are attached form a 5-, 6- or

— 7-membered saturated or unsaturated ring which optionally contains an oxygen

— atom as ring-forming atom and/or which may be substituted by one, two or three

— radicals selected from the group consisting of  $C_1$ - $C_4$ -alkyl and halogen;

$R^{26}$  is hydrogen,  $C_1$ - $C_4$ -alkyl or  $C_1$ - $C_4$ -haloalkyl;

$R^{27}$  is hydrogen,  $C_1$ - $C_4$ -alkyl or  $C_1$ - $C_4$ -haloalkyl;

or

$R^{26}$  and  $R^{27}$  together with the atoms to which they are attached form a 5-, 6- or

— 7-membered saturated or unsaturated ring which optionally contains an oxygen

— atom as ring-forming atom and/or which may be substituted by one, two or three

— radicals selected from the group consisting of  $C_1$ - $C_4$ -alkyl and halogen;

$A^1$ ,  $A^2$ ,  $A^3$ ,  $A^4$  are each independently of one another oxygen or sulfur;



or an agriculturally useful salt thereof.

2. (Currently Amended) A benzoic acid compound as claimed in claim 1 where  $R^2$  is  $[[10]]$  fluorine, chlorine or hydrogen.

3. (Previously Presented) A benzoic acid compound as claimed in claim 1 where  $R^3$  is chlorine or cyano.

4. (Previously Presented) A benzoic acid compound as claimed in claim 1 where X is oxygen.

5. (Previously Presented) A benzoic acid compound as claimed in claim 1 where  $R^6$  is hydrogen.

6. (Previously Presented) A benzoic acid compound as claimed in claim 1 where  $R^1$  is a heterocyclic radical of the formula II-A in which  $R^{10}$  is  $C_1$ - $C_4$ -alkyl or amino,  $R^{11}$  is  $C_1$ - $C_4$ -haloalkyl and  $R^{12}$  is hydrogen.

7. (Previously Presented) A benzoic acid compound as claimed in claim 1 where  $R^1$  is a heterocyclic radical of the formula II-B in which  $R^{13}$  and  $R^{13'}$  are each independently of one another  $C_1$ - $C_4$ -alkyl.



8. (Previously Presented) A benzoic acid compound as claimed in claim 1 where  $R^1$  is a heterocyclic radical of the formula II-C in which  $R^{14}$  is fluorine or chlorine,  $R^{15}$  is hydrogen and  $R^{16}$  is  $C_1$ - $C_4$ -haloalkyl,  $C_1$ - $C_4$ -alkylsulfonyl or  $C_1$ - $C_4$ -alkylsulfonyloxy.

9. (Previously Presented) A benzoic acid compound as claimed in claim 1 where  $R^1$  is a heterocyclic radical of the formula II-D in which  $R^{18}$  is hydrogen, methyl or amino,  $R^{19}$  is  $C_1$ - $C_4$ -haloalkyl or  $C_1$ - $C_4$ -alkylsulfonyl and  $R^{20}$  is hydrogen.

10. (Cancelled)

11. (Cancelled)

12. (Cancelled)

13. (Cancelled)

14. (Previously Presented) A benzoic acid compound as claimed in claim 1 where

$R^2$  is hydrogen, chlorine or fluorine,

$R^3$  is chlorine or cyano,

$R^6$  is hydrogen and

X is oxygen.



15. (Previously Presented) A benzoic acid compound as claimed in claim 1 where  $R^4$  or  $R^5$  is hydrogen and the other radical  $R^4$  or  $R^5$  is  $C_1$ - $C_4$ -alkyl or  $R^4$ ,  $R^5$  are each methyl.

16. (Previously Presented) A composition comprising a herbicidally effective amount of at least one 3-heterocyclyl-substituted benzoic acid compound of the formula I or an agriculturally useful salt thereof as claimed in claim 1 and at least one inert liquid and/or solid carrier and, if desired, at least one surfactant.

17. (Previously Presented) A composition for the desiccation/defoliation of plants, comprising an effective amount of at least one 3-heterocyclyl-substituted benzoic acid compound of the formula I or an agriculturally useful salt thereof as claimed in claim 1 which acts as a desiccant/defoliant and at least one inert liquid and/or solid carrier and, if desired, at least one surfactant.

18. (Previously Presented) A method for controlling unwanted vegetation, which comprises allowing a herbicidally effective amount of at least one 3-heterocyclyl-substituted benzoic acid compound of the formula I or an agriculturally useful salt thereof as claimed in claim 1 to act on plants, their habitat and/or on seed.

19. (Previously Presented) A method for the desiccation/defoliation of plants, which comprises allowing an amount which is effective as a desiccant/defoliant of at least one



3-heterocyclyl-substituted benzoic acid compound of the formula I or an agriculturally useful salt thereof as claimed in claim 1 to act on plants.

20. (Cancelled)

21. (Previously Presented) A method for controlling unwanted vegetation or for the desiccation/defoliation of plants, comprising applying to plants, the habitat of the plants or seeds of the plants an agriculturally effective amount of a compound or salt of claim 1.